

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ATHENS 13075 091713Z

22

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01

USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /030 W

----- 061430

R 091635Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8230

INFO AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

CONFIDENTIAL ATHENS 13075

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR GR

SUBJECT: CARAMANLIS CHIDES DOMESTIC PRESS IN

ADDRESS TO FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. LAST EVENING (DEC 8), THE FOREIGN PRESS ASSOCIATION
IN ATHENS CELEBRATED ITS 60TH ANNIVERSARY. PRIME MINISTER
CARAMANLIS LED THE PARADE OF PROMINENT GOG OFFICIALS, FOREIGN
DIPLOMATS AND OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE. AS THE HONORED GUEST,
CARAMANLIS DELIVERED SOME SUCCINCT AFTER-DINNER REMARKS ON
HIS VIEWS OF THE ROLE OF THE PRESS IN A DEMOCRACY.

2. THE PRIME MINISTER PRAISED THE MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN
PRESS ASSOCIATION FOR THEIR "OBJECTIVE AND OFTEN COURAGEOUS
INFORMING OF WORLD OPINION" DURING AND AFTER THE JUNTA, AND
TOLD THEM THEY HAD ASSISTED IN THE RESTORATION OF DEMOCRACY
TO GREECE. HE THEN TURNED TO WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS THE
"CRUCIAL ROLE" OF THE PRESS IN THE POLITICAL SECTOR,
ESPECIALLY IN A DEMOCRACY. AND WHILE HIS TONE REMAINED
LIGHT THROUGHOUT, IT SOON BECAME CLEAR THE REST OF HIS
MESSAGE WAS DIRECTED AT THE NOTORIOUSLY IRRESPONSIBLE GREEK
DOMESTIC JOURNALISTS.

3. CARAMANLIS SAID THAT TRUTH WAS A BASIC VIRTUE OF
DEMOCRACY, AND THAT AN OBJECTIVE PRESS WAS ESSENTIAL SO
THE PEOPLE COULD BE INFORMED IN MAKING THEIR DECISIONS.
NEVERTHELESS, TO BE OBJECTIVE THE PRESS MUST BE FREE;
THUS, HE CONTINUED, THE INTERDEPENDENCE BETWEEN THE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ATHENS 13075 091713Z

PRESS AND DEMOCRACY IS "ABSOLUTE". HE NEXT QUOTED A

PROMINENT EXPERT ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS (SOME WONDERED IF
THE EXPERT WERE NOT CARAMANLIS HIMSELF) AS SAYING
"SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF THE PRESS FOR ME AND THAT WILL
SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF DEMOCRACY." THE PRIME MINISTER NOTED
THE DIFFICULTY IN DETERMINING THE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN
FREEDOM AND THE ABUSE OF FREEDOM, THE SECOND OF WHICH
HE CLAIMED LEADS TO THE DEATH OF DEMOCRACY. IN
CONCLUSION HE EMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR A "FREE", BUT
ALSO A "SOUND", PRESS, DEFINING THE LATTER AS A PRESS
WHICH ENLIGHTENS AND GUIDES THE PUBLIC WITHOUT PREJUDICE.
END UNCLASSIFIED

BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL

4. COMMENT: IN PRIVATE PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS HAS
ON OCCASION LET IT BE KNOWN THAT HE SEES THE
IRRESPONSIBILITY OF THE GREEK PRESS AS ONE OF THE
GREATEST THREATS TO HIS ATTEMPTS TO ESTABLISH A
FUNCTIONING DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM IN GREECE THAT WILL
ENDURE. HOWEVER, WHILE BEMOANING THIS IRRESPONSIBILITY,
HE HAS AT THE SAME TIME STAUNCHLY DEFENDED THE
NECESSITY OF THE PRESS AS AN INSTITUTION IN A DEMOCRATIC
SOCIETY. THE DILEMMA, AS HE POINTS OUT, IS HOW TO
FOSTER OBJECTIVITY IN THE FOURTH ESTATE, AN INSTITUTION
WHICH IN GREECE HAS RARELY HAD AN OPPORTUNITY IN THE
PAST TO PRACTICE IN AN OBJECTIVE MILIEU.

END CONFIDENTIAL.

KUBISCH

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: THE PRESS, COMMEMORATIVE CELEBRATIONS, SPEECHES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 DEC 1976
Decapton Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ATHENS13075
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760455-1209
From: ATHENS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761256/aaaabwbi.tel
Line Count: 88
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29 APR 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <23 AUG 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CARAMANLIS CHIDES DOMESTIC PRESS IN ADDRESS TO FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED
TAGS: PFOR, SOPN, GR, (CARAMANLIS, CONSTANTINE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006